DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 291 914 CE 049 755

TITLE Principles and Techniques for Effective ABE Staff Development. Examples from Five Exemplary Programs.

INSTITUTION Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Washington, DC. Div. of Adult Education.

PUB DATE Mar 88

NOTE 15p.; For related reports, see ED 274 785 and ED 279 789.

PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Adult Basic Education; *Demonstration Programs; Program Development; Program Effectiveness; *Staff Development; *Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

This document provides information about five adult basic education (ABE) staff development programs that illustrate the use of the principles identified in a research report. (The 70 principles and 39 corresponding techniques relate to planning and conducting training for ABE teachers and other staff.) Each of these staff development projects presents a real life example of one or more of the staff development principles. Although four of the five projects are statewide efforts, the examples given have all been applied to local ABE programs with ABE practitioners. Fairfax ABE Program, Virginia, illustrates the technique of a professional development plan and principle of allowing participants to choose their involvement and linking training to an individual plan. The San Francisco State University technique of coaching addresses the principle of oncall assistance of colleagues at the work site. The technique of staff exchange, which the Wisconsin ABE Program illustrates, involves the principle of providing teachers with the opportunity to meet and share ideas. The Oregon Talent Bank, Oregon State University, phased training technique shows the principle of spacing staff development over time. Maryland's Adult Performance Program illustrates the technique of training for program development and the principle of making staff development a part of program development. (YLB)

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PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE ABE STAFF DEVELOPMENT

EXAMPLES FROM FIVE EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS

ED291914

DIVISION OF ADULT EDUCATION
U.S DEPT. OF EDUCATION

MARCH, 1988

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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One year ago the national ABE Staff Development Consortium issued its "Principles and Techniques for Effective ABE Staff Development". This research report identified and rated 70 principles and 39 techniques for planning and conducting training for ABE teachers and other staff.

Practitioners have often asked for information about programs that illustrates the use of these principles. Five staff development projects have been identified in California, Maryland, Oregon, Virginia, and Wisconsin. Each provides a "real life" example of one or more of the staff development principles included in the above report.

While four of the five projects are statewide efforts, the examples given have all been applied in local ABE programs with ABE practitioners. If you would like additional information about these or other staff development programs, contact:

James Parker
Division Adult Education
U.S. Dept. of Education
Washington, DC 20202-5515
202/732-2399

TECHNIQUE: Professional Development Plan (Fairfax ABE Program, VA)

Principle addressed- Staff development activities are more likely to be successful when the participants choose their involvement and when training is linked to an individual professional development plan.

A three-stage self-directed learning model* used in Fairfax County's adult basic education program has proven to be an effective method for staff development. The first stage of the model involves collaborative self-evaluation and dialogue concerning each participant's own teaching process.

The second stage- the focus of this Technique- is the development of a Personal Professional Development Plan. Twelve steps (in four phrases) are followed in its development. Stated from the learner's perspective, they involve the following:

1. Initiating Phase--(reflective)

   What do I hope to accomplish?
   What are my learning objectives?
   What is my potential payoff?

2. Planning Phase--(reflective)

   What resources are available to me?
   What will be my learning activities?
   How will I judge the success of this project?

3. Managing Phase--(active)

   Complete each activity in the planning phase.
   Organize and interpret data.
   Record progress and/or report findings.

4. Evaluative Phase--(reflective after the fulfillment of plan)

   To what extent did I achieve my objectives?
   To what extent did I select and pursue appropriate learning activities?
   What are my learning needs now?

This personal professional development plan, which is a self-directed learning project, encourages teacher-learners to address their professional self-improvement objectives in a proactive and creative fashion. It also gives each instructor a framework for the discipline and commitment necessary to accomplish focused intentional change and provides the adult education program with a framework for recognizing and rewarding individual professional development efforts.

The purpose of a formal professional development plan is to assure that individual growth is not diminished by indecision or lack of planning. It is expected that modifications will be needed while the plan is in progress.

The final stage involves an evaluation of the development plan. This is accomplished through the use of surveys and interviews by the program director or other staff.

*From "Adult Education Staff Development: Program Research and Implementation" by Edward Jones and Jean Lowe, Adult Literacy and Basic Education, 1985.

TECHNIQUE: Coaching (San Francisco State University)

Principle addressed- Coaching is a powerful approach to continuing growth. Inservice programs, conferences, and college-based courses are necessary and valuable as well. However, the oncall assistance of colleagues at the work site can provide the support, the resources, and the ongoing feedback required to actually implement new practices teachers learn in traditional settings.

The California Staff Development Project during its earlier years systematically encouraged programs to incorporate effective principles of staff development. Recent research has furnished some convincing evidence about the processes that bring about change at the teacher level.

For example, Bruce Joyce finds that all of the following elements are essential to effective change of teaching strategies:

a. awareness of the need to change and what the possible changes might be,
b. understanding of the theory behind the chages,
c. seeing the change modeled and having an opportunity to ask questions about the demonstrations,
d. having a chance to practice the new strategies and to receive immediate feedback regarding the procedure and results, and
e. finally and most important, receiving COACHING over a period of time until the new strategies are comfortably incorporated as part of their teaching repertoire.

Beverly Showers notes that the research suggests:

> Teachers should coach each other. To do so, teaching teams need (1) familiarity with the new skill or strategy to be mastered and transferred into the teacher's active repertoire; (2) access to other teachers in their classrooms for purposes of observation, feedback, conferences; and (3) openness to experimentation and willingness to persist and to refine skills. The logistics involved in a continuous growing and learning process favor peer coaches. Teams can be built and can learn the skills during training.

She further reports that coaching has far and away proved to be the most effective system for bringing about transfer of training to actual classroom practice (see attached chart).

The California Project piloted this approach in three diverse program sites. At each site three coaching teams were formed: an ESL team, an ABE team, and an Administrative support team.

Each team was required to participate in coaching training, but the Administrative team met separately to plan logistical and other support while the Coaching teams were trained in specific and unfamiliar teaching strategies.

The pilot project on Coaching was considered by all involved to be highly successful. It also generated considerable interest among neighboring programs in California.

Appendix : Components of Effective Inservice Training

COMPONENT	WHAT IT DOES	HOW TO DO IT	WHAT GOOD IS IT?	COMMENTS
THEORY	Provides rationale and description of the skill or technique, including potential uses.	Readings, lectures, films, discussions.	Raises awareness; increases conceptual control of a subject.	When used alone, theory rarely results in skill acquisition or transfer of skills into the classroom.
MODELING OR DEMONSTRATION	Enacts the teaching strategy or skill.	Live demonstration, films, television, or other media.	Has considerable effect on awareness; some effect on knowledge; increases mastery of theory.	Modeling alone is unlikely to result in the acquisition or transfer of skills unless accompanied by other components.
PRACTICE	Gives experience with a new skill or strategy.	Simulation of the event with peers or small groups.	Once awareness and knowledge have been achieved, practice is an effective way of acquiring skills and strategies.	Practice is an extremely effective way to develop competence in a wide variety of classroom techniques.
FEEDBACK	Offers a system for observing teaching behavior and provides the opportunity to reflect on teaching.	Can be self-administered; provided by peers, observers, coaches, on a regular or occasional basis.	Results in greater awareness of one's teaching behavior and knowledge about alternatives.	Changes in behavior will persist as long as feedback continues; then behaviors gradually return to the original point.
COACHING	Supplies support, technical assistance, and commitment to the teacher.	Use other teachers, supervisors, professors, curriculum consultants as coaches.	Helps teachers to analyze content and approach and make plans to help students adapt.	This element is especially necessary in the mastery of new approaches or skills; it encourages implementation.

TECHNIQUE: Staff Exchange (Wisconsin ABE Program)

Principle addressed- Giving teachers the opportunity to meet and share ideas with colleagues is valuable in providing support and facilitating change.

The Statewide Staff Exchange was organized and funded through Section 310 of the Adult Education Act to provide interested staff with an opportunity to visit other ABE programs and staff and gain new insights into processes and programs outside of their own district.

On-site visits, which are well organized, encourage in-depth understanding and the tranfer or adaptation of elements of outstanding programs. Additionally, staff exchange expands the individual's concept of the Adult Education system as a whole and strengthens the networking concept among colleagues statewide.

The Staff Exchange process involves five steps:

1. Three months before the exchange visits are scheduled to begin a letter of request is sent to each local supervisor in the State. This letter informs them of the exchange opportunity and outlines the steps to be taken for participants.

2. Participating districts fill out a Program Description Form (sent with first mailing). These forms are returned to the State Office, duplicated and mailed back to all participants. They allow people to gain some insight into various programs and assist in making choices.

3. The second mailing includes the Description Forms and encourages the identification of specific objectives in conjunction with fellow staff members before visits are made. It also requests that travelers make their own travel arrangements, including setting up a convenient time for on-site visit.

4. The local program visits focus on program operations such as student intake and assessment, teacher/student ratio, accountability, funding, and support service. Instructional methods are observed and materials are reviewed.

5. The long-range value of the Exchange can not be entirely measured but is seen in program innovations and instructor motivation. A follow-up instrument is sent to all participants six months from the time of the Exchange to determine some of the impact.

TECHNIQUE: Phased Training (Oregon Talent Bank, Oregan State University)

Principle addressed- Staff development takes spaced time, i.e. teachers need intervals in which to plan and try out new approaches and return to evaluate their successes and problems.

Oregon Talent Bank is an innovative staff development project offered to Adult Education programs within the community colleges of the State of Oregon.

An emphasis is placed upon the establishment of a peer network which matches the specific needs of an institution with instructors who have demonstrated expertise in that particular area. Staff development programs are then provided to individual sites in direct response to a needs assessment conducted during the peer review process.

Once a staff development plan has been prepared by the local program director and the staff development specialist, key lead instructors are identified. They collaborate with their colleagues and the Talent Bank resource person to prepare an instructional sequence appropriate for their needs. Staff development activities are presented in a two or three part sequence to ensure appropriate timing and to build upon the level of experience and training of the participants.

Following the staff development activity, instructors are asked to demonstrate the application of these new learnings to their own instructional setting. On-site monitoring by staff development and Talent Bank personnel is an integral part of the staff development activity, including peer coaching by the lead instructors.

Impact evaluation is tied to the peer review process which allows for continuous evaluation within a predetermined interval.

Talent Bank programs are conducted on awareness (Talent Bank I) or workshop (Talent Bank II) levels, depending on training objectives. The attached ESL training outlines illustrate the differences.

ACTIVITIES FOR PERSONAL SECOND LANGUAGE USE

PRESENTER: Joseph Ponce
Portland Community College

TARGET AUDIENCE: ESL Instructors, all levels

DESCRIPTION: This 90-minute presentation focuses on a variety of activities that utilize the learners' background knowledge (needs, interests and concerns) to encourage self-expression in a meaningful, communicative setting.

OBJECTIVES: TO provide for and encourage self-expression among students.

To address the needs, interests and concerns of the student in a manner that is both meaningful and relevant.

To encourage an accepting relationship between all classroom participants, teachers, and students.

GUIDED LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE: AN APPROACH TO LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

PRESENTER: Diedre Cain
Portland Community College

TARGET AUDIENCE: ESL Instructors

DESCRIIPTION: This workshop presents techniques for guiding students in generating language experience stories that are rich in vocabulary and in grammatical patterns. Not only do the resulting texts serve to develop literacy skills, but they maximize the opportunities for students' acquisition of linguistic competence as well. Techniques for guiding the stories focus on oral questions which are used to solicit information from students. Such questioning produces linguistic content in a grammatically correct text. The text provides a foundation for a variety of follow-up activities and lessons.

OBJECTIVES: Participants will be able to:

State the benefits of the language experience approach to literacy.

Identify techniques for guiding language experience toward producing grammatical patterns and rich vocabulary.

Recognize appropriate materials for use with the techniques.

List follow-up activities which will reinforce and build on the text.

Identify considerations to be made for use of guided language experience with different levels of students.

TECHNIQUE: Training for Program Development (Maryland's Adult Performance Program- MAPP)

Principles Addressed- Staff development is an on-going process that encourages growth of continuing staff and encourages new staff to become an integral part of the system and of program development. Improvement of ABE instruction and inservice education should be closely related.

In 1985 Maryland began implementation of Project MAPP, establishing a statewide competency-based ABE program over a five year period. This is being accomplished in three phrases, from program piloting to full implementation. Three separate projects have been provided to develop assessment, instruction, and management systems.

Staff development has been an integral component of this process. Initially, staff development needs with respect to local CBAE programs are identified. A staff needs assessment identifies the gaps between the existing staff competencies and the needed competencies. Information on staff development needs are obtained in the following ways:

- Interviews with staff
- Observations
- Meetings
- Staff Development Needs Assessment

Once the information has been gathered, it is carefully analyzed to determine which needs are common to the group as a whole, and which ones are unique to an individual. It is important that individual needs be identified as well as the needs of large groups. All participants in the survey are assured they have been considered in the staff development plan.

Priorities determined from the needs assessment become the foundation for designing & implementing a plan of staff development. Activities for staff development are scheduled on a regular basis with varying formats to meet specific staff needs. Delivery modes for staff development include:

*Workshop/demonstrations
*Classroom visitations
*Rap sessions
*Professional conferences
*Consultants (MSDE Staff, Project MAPP Project Directors and Technical Assistants)
*Reference reading
*Video tapes

Evaluation of staff development activities also conducted regularly. These results assist program personnel in updating and revising the plan for staff development. Staff must remain active in this evaluation process to insure an individualized and flexible plan.

The recommended local staff development schedule conducted annually is as follows:

Time Frames	Objectives
April	Conduct needs assessment
May	Meet with staff to identify concerns and set priorities
June-August	Develop a plan
September-November	Conduct activities
December-February	Evaluate activities and plan for April meeting

Maryland plans to shift the responsibility for staff development from project consultants to local program staff over the implementation period.